

For Immediate Release:

June 6, 2014

Contact:

Mike McCoy, Executive Director
(916) 324-6665 (direct)
(916) 323-9158 (main office line)
Mike.mccoy@sgc.ca.gov

**CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL AWARDS \$40 MILLION FOR
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANTS AND URBAN GREENING GRANTS**

Proposition 84 Funding Will Benefit Communities Statewide

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) announced Tuesday \$40.2 million in local assistance grants that will lead to more sustainable communities across California. A total of 73 individual awards will go to cities, counties, regional and local agencies, and nonprofit partners. All awards are funded through voter-approved Proposition 84 bond allocations.

The Sustainable Communities Planning Grants fund climate action plans, infill development plans, Sustainable Communities Strategies implementation, and other planning efforts, all specifically aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state climate goals. The Urban Greening Grants establish or enhance community green areas such as urban forests, open spaces, wetlands, and community gardens.

“Not only do these grants result in plans and projects that make our communities more vibrant, but collectively these investments get us closer to meeting air quality and water conservation goals that are especially significant during this drought,” said Secretary for Natural Resources and SGC Member John Laird.

Of the \$40 million in grants, \$16 million is through the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program. In a pool of 88 applications, 33 proposals received awards through this program. For example:

Tulare County will use a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant of \$390,750 to work in partnership with residents and stakeholders to assess infrastructure needs in rural disadvantaged communities. Findings will inform decisions related to infrastructure improvements, investment strategies and land use changes to meet the goals of [SB 244](#).

City of West Sacramento will use a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant of \$377,561 for the Pioneer Bluff Redevelopment Master Plan to lay the groundwork for infill development, leveraging funds for planning, design, infrastructure, economic development, recreation, housing, brownfields cleanup, and other actions necessary to attract infill to the emerging urban core adjacent to downtown Sacramento. The Pioneer Bluff Redevelopment Master Plan includes land use and urban design strategies, infrastructure master planning, financing, parks/trails master planning, analysis of environmental conditions, economic/market analysis, and related activities needed to spur urban infill development.

\$24 million of the grants being announced today is awarded through the Urban Greening Grant Program. Out of 184 concept proposals, 40 entities received awards through this program. For example:

-more-

The Trust for Public Land, in partnership with the City of Ventura, will use an Urban Greening Grant of \$1,000,000 to leverage other funding to develop a new 2.5 acre passive park in a disadvantaged community. The Park will include a walking path, native trees and understory and a series of vegetated bioswales for water treatment and recharge. Permeable surfaces will help recharge groundwater by collecting 100 percent of the project's runoff.

Through a subset of the Urban Greening Grants designated for small projects in disadvantaged communities, the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust will expand its community edible garden and plant native, drought-resistant trees and understory. An existing cistern will be used for irrigation.

"California's local and regional governments are helping the state lead the nation in creating sustainable, healthy and just communities," said SGC Executive Director Mike McCoy. "We are pleased to be partners with them in this endeavor."

Both grant programs prioritize funding for disadvantaged communities. Eighty-six percent of the Urban Greening projects were awarded to disadvantaged communities, and Sustainable Community Planning Grants program approved 10 awards to disadvantaged communities totaling \$4.6 million, or 28 percent of total funds available.

This is the third round of funding that has been awarded by the SGC through these two grant programs. More than \$132 million has been awarded since 2010.

"In communities all around the state, dozens of planning grants and greening grants from the Strategic Growth Council over the past four years are making a difference, building public parks and community gardens, and creating opportunities for recreation in places that people live," said Ken Alex, Director of the Office of Planning and Research and Chair of the Strategic Growth Council.

In 2006, California voters passed Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act, which authorized the Legislature to appropriate funds to support urban greening projects and sustainable community planning.

The Strategic Growth Council is a cabinet level committee comprising of Office of Planning & Research, California Health and Human Services, California Natural Resources Agency, California State Transportation Agency, Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and a public member that coordinates the activities of state agencies and partners with stakeholders to promote sustainability, economic prosperity, and quality of life for all Californians.

For a complete list and descriptions of sustainable communities planning and urban greening grantees, please visit the Grants page of the Strategic Growth Council's website: <http://www.sgc.ca.gov>

###